

assumption being that salary levels should fairly reflect the amount of work being done. The perception was that this was not the case in nursing education. Another, and related, perception was a lack of recognition and/or lack of support. Some faculty expressed concern over the quality of students being admitted into nursing programs and/or the pressure to retain poor students. This issue also comes up in their comments about lack of support from school administrators.

One of the questions we asked of current faculty was how long they intend to stay in the role of nurse educator. Five of our 75 respondents indicated they planned to leave the role within a year. (See the table on page 5.) In three of those five cases, the reason for their immediate departure from the faculty role is to retire. However, the other two cite workplace issues as the driving force. One is planning to leave because she has been asked to teach in an area outside her expertise, and one is leaving due to a lack of support from administration.

Do ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors differ by the type of program for current faculty?

We also examined the responses of current faculty by breaking them into groups based on their primary education program type. This resulted in three usable groupings: PNE (n=8), ADN (n=37) and BSN (n=28). Faculty in hospital diploma programs were excluded from this analysis due to their very small numbers (n=2). The coded values of their answers to our open-ended questions were organized by these groupings and then compared for consistency and order of emphasis. We found very little variation in the factors identified by current faculty in these three groups, or in the prioritization of their responses.

Ex-Faculty

Methodology

Gazza & Shellenbarger (2005) state that nursing faculty don’t leave teaching; they leave to find other jobs in schools of nursing. Our experience in identifying and contacting ex-nursing educators certainly supports that statement.

Our initial strategy for identifying ex-faculty who had left the role within the past 5 years for any reason other than retirement was to use a snowball sampling method. We asked our sample of current faculty to recommend our study to any ex-faculty they knew and ask them to contact us. We also contacted all nursing program deans and directors throughout the state seeking names and contact information for any faculty who had recently left their programs. Fourteen potential participants were identified in this way. They were invited to participate in an on-line discussion similar to a focus group session. Our thinking was that holding the discussion on-line would make it easier for a larger number of geographically dispersed people to participate, while also capturing a written transcript of the sessions which could then be used in a qualitative analysis. And, because these were ex-faculty, we assumed a certain level of comfort with the technology. Several dates and times were offered for these on-line discussion sessions. Eight of our 14 potential participants signed up for a session. To our disappointment, only four ex-faculty actually participated. One additional participant experienced technical difficulties that resulted in an interview by telephone. That conversation was recorded and transcribed. All of these participants completed a short background survey on-line designed to collect basic demographic information.